

Action, Ochiai is a reference showing a roller that is not foamed as all. Okada, the other reference applied in the rejection, is about rollers used in toner development.

In Okada the supply member (26 in Fig. 1) is foamed in most embodiments disclosed. Since the member is to move (supply) toner to the toner carrier (32 in Fig. 1), the necessary implication is that the foam characteristics on the surface are important to the operation. Claim 1 as now amended negates foam bubbles on the surface, and thus fundamentally distinguishes over the toner carrier of Okada.

In many embodiments of Okada, the toner carrier is not foamed. The embodiment at column 20 termed "EIGHTH EMBODIMENT" does describe a foamed embodiment with a solid surface as follows, at lines 51 to 60: "A conductive-open-cell silicone rubber foam layer was formed on a shaft made of stainless steel. The silicone rubber foam layer had a solid surface layer portion at its surface, and its foam cell diameter at its center portion was about 200 μ m. A magnetic coating material in which carbon black functioning as conductive powder and barium ferrite functioning as magnetic powder were dispersed was applied in a thickness of about 50 μ m to the outer surface of the silicon rubber foam layer."

Nothing in that disclosure of the toner carrier teaches that a magnet roller should be or could be foamed so that the foam bubbles are not at the outside of the roller. Okada simply has no teaching of a foamed magnetic roller.

The Official Action rejects as indefinite claims 9 and 10 for the use of "substantially equivalent" and "same size roller." Reconsideration in view of the amended language of claim 1 is respectfully requested. Certainly the use of "substantially" in claims is well established. The claims simply describe a comparison to establish infringement between two rollers that are the same except for the foaming.

Claim 8 is further rejected as obvious on the basis of Ochiai teaching carbon filler. However, such a teaching would not overcome the deficiencies of the references as discussed in the foregoing.

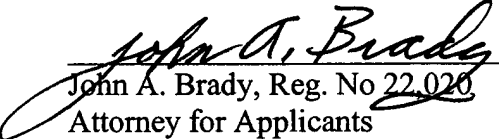
Similarly, the rejection of claims 9 and 10 as matters of obvious design is overcome by the deficiencies of the references as discussed in the foregoing.

Claims 5 and 6 are further rejected as obvious as obvious on the basis of the Ochiai teaching of nylon, and claim 7 is rejected as obvious on the basis of the Lee teaching of strontium. However, such teaching could not supply the deficiencies of the references discussed in the foregoing.

Accordingly, reconsideration in due course is respectfully requested, followed by allowance of claims 1-10, all of the claims under examination. In anticipation of allowance, claims 11-15, the restricted claims, are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. As presently advised, the undersigned expects that a continuation application will be filed directed to the subject matter of claim 11-15.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael John Dixon et al.


John A. Brady, Reg. No 22,020
Attorney for Applicants
Lexmark International, Inc.
Intellectual Property Law Dept.
740 W. New Circle Road
Lexington, KY 40550
(859) 232-4785